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## A BATTUE.

A PARCEL of letters just before Christmas has less charms than usual. Thin commercial envelopes often shew the ruled lines of bills before they are opened. So when, one morning, about that period, I took up some half-dozen productions of the penny-postage at breakfast, I kept for the last, as a digester, the most unprofessional-looking of the batch.

'Mary,' said I to my wife, 'here is an invitation from Greenfield. He wants us to go down next Monday, and promises among other things a battue. Alfred has come back from India, and is keeping his hand in at pheasants. They are to have a grand day in some neighbour's woods next Tuesday.'

'Shooting,' says Mary, 'will be a change for you; and I think it will do you good.'

'Change enough, after London work,' I replied; 'and as I think we can manage to run down for a clear day at least, I vote we go. I haven't had a gun in my hand these five years; besides, I've a great notion to see some of this "extraordinary sport" that country squires have invented. We will go on Monday; I'll hire a gun.'

And so I did, as I walked down Oxford Street that morning into the city. Do not suppose, though, that I merely ordered one to be sent to my house, as I would a barrel of oysters; I chose it with nicety, and not without thought of Colonel Hawker.

We left town on Boxing-day for our short visit to my country friend. He lived in the east of England. Matters did not look promising as we drove to the Shoreditch station. The frost had gone, and with it the spirit of Christmas. Everything was in full thaw, down to the cushions of the cab. The few holiday-makers already on the stir walked like men going to work. The shop-boys were the most resolute. They had mentally rehearsed the fun for weeks behind the counter, and now, in cheerful suits of shiny black cloth, with greased hair, and soft Cubas, were setting off, determined to make the most of the day. So was Cabby; he drove so fast, that we reached the terminus twenty minutes before our train started. Having deposited our wraps in two choice corners, we compared our watches deliberately with the railway clock, persuaded a porter not to put the 'fish' between two heavy portmanteaus, and bought the *Times*. When we had steamed through the rough sea of dirty tiles which flows over the heads of the inhabitants of Spitalfields, we were reminded of the great difference in temperature between London and the country. Whether our experience is supported by the thermometer or not, I do not know. Flesh and blood have their own test of cold, quite irrespective of

box-wood and quicksilver. No independent man will suffer his opinions about the weather to be influenced by so capricious a witness as mercury. I know that as soon as London is left, the cold increases at once. As we drove to the station, we kept one window of the cab open; we were soon glad to close both in the railway-carriage. Don't suppose we were alone; there was, besides wife and self, a fat man, fresh from a successful breakfast, ruddy, and wrapped in shawls just warmed at the fire; but in spite of him, it grew suddenly quite cold. It was nothing less than going out of doors on a large scale.

We resisted the temptation to refresh ourselves at Colchester, understanding that the great idiot asylum close to the station is tenanted by passengers who have been foolish enough to believe that 'Stop here for Refreshment' applies to anybody beside the engine. For a wonder, the tide was up at Manningtree and Ipswich; this time, however, there is reason to suppose, it was independent of lunar attraction, for the waters were 'out' on both sides of the railway. On through damp gusty stations, by sloppy-looking patches of snow—wonderfully white in the eyes of a Londoner—to Haughley junction, which, being the only uncovered station on the line, has been chosen as the principal place for shifting passengers from one carriage to another.

At last we reached our destination. 'All right,' said the guard; at least, he didn't say all right, but whistled it, and threw up his arms as if he had been shot. The driving-wheel spun round impatiently: one by one the carriages caught the impulse of the engine; the guard talking to the porter, crescendo, about some return-sacks, as he stood on the van-steps, holding on by the handle of its open door, and apparently keeping the pith of his communication to the last, like a postscript. One or two passengers who had let down the windows of their carriage, now pulled them up, looking indifferently out as the train moved slowly past us.

'Tickets, please,' said the station-master, and then turned on his heel.

'Ah, my dear fellow! how are you? how are you both?' This your luggage? (loud aside), here, porter! And how are you? Not too late to wish you a happy Christmas now? Come along; carriage waiting! All well at home—dine at six.'

What a difference it makes when two brothers in the great family of man happen to know one another! My friend's house is about four miles from the station. It is set in a hollow, just off the road, close to a rookery. The approach to it winds through shrubberies of evergreen, cunningly planted so as to take the edge off the wind, which, in this corner of our

island—from whatever quarter it blows—is always east. The front-door is snugly set in a porch with closed sides, which affords real shelter to the visitor during the cold interval between the ringing and answering of the bell. Over the door was a martin's nest, still in good preservation, with a board nailed up beneath it—not a bad omen of the hospitality of the master of the house.

Our party was cheerful enough. Counting the baby, which, like a non-elect, had a voice, but no recognised vote in the community, we were fifteen. Our host and hostess, grandmamma, Uncle Richard, Alfred the soldier son—hairy as a Scotch terrier—a cousin in crinoline, the elder children of the family, with a school-boy home for the holidays, and full of the prodigious performances of an Enfield rifle, with which he had been 'practising,' not being aware that they included the premature decease of a cow three-quarters of a mile off, in a neighbouring parish.

We were very merry that evening, and played in old-fashioned Christmas ways, without feeling curiosity about any of the new games advertised in the *Times*. Uncle Richard excelled especially in making candle-ends out of apples, which, with a strip of almond for a wick, he swallowed blazing, to the delight of the young folks, and his own concealed disgust. The effect of the asphyxia of our host, who was nearly choked by popping into his throat a chestnut, which Master Herbert, the school-boy, had introduced among the ingredients of the dragon. At last our games over, the children sent away, and the drawing-room deserted by the ladies, our host, Uncle Richard, Alfred, and I, adjourned to the study for a pipe, and glass of whisky and water, before going to bed.

'Well, Alfred,' said Uncle Richard, when he had established an easy draught in the stem of his meerschaum, unbuttoned the three lower buttons of his waistcoat, and put his feet upon a chair—'where is this battue you have been talking about to come off to-morrow?'

'I believe we are to begin with the Spinny, then take the long copes, and end with the Home Wood; that is, if the weather clears up; for leave alone the soaking we should get if we went cover-shooting in the rain, a strong wind might blow some of the pheasants out of our beat. But,' added he, 'I saw Lowrie this afternoon, and he says it will be fine enough to-morrow; and I would back him against all the barometers in the world.'

'Who is Lowrie?' I asked.

'Hudson's keeper,' replied our host. 'Don't you remember him, when you were here this time last year, and broke that great hole in the ice? He slid further than any man or boy on the pond.'

'A slippery fellow,' remarked Uncle Richard.

'Yes, to be sure,' I said; 'and when I was pulled out, he gave me some brandy from the biggest pocket-pistol I ever saw in my life. It could not have held less than a quart.'

'It often does though, I'm afraid,' said our host, 'after poor Lowrie has had the charge of it for any time.'

'But about this battue,' continued I; 'can you take me with you, Alfred? I've brought a gun.'

'By all means. Hudson is a capital fellow, and will be delighted to see you; besides, he wants to have the rabbits killed down; so, if your conscience troubles you about shooting without a licence, you can have plenty of sport with them.'

'Conscience!' said Uncle Richard, rather snappishly; 'I'm afraid the game-laws don't help to preserve that among you country squires and sportsmen.'

'Perhaps you would like to come with us?' said Alfred. 'I'll lend you my rifle, and then you can shoot the chairman of quarter-sessions, promiscuous-like, as they say in East Anglia. I know he will be there.'

But really,' pursued he, 'don't you think a pheasant is as much a man's property as his poultry or his pig?'

'Think!' said Uncle Richard. 'I'm sure it is not. Suppose two pork-butchers next door to one another. A's pigs stroll into B's yard; B may not straightway appropriate them. But if A's pheasants stray into B's cover, B, being a licensed pheasant-butcher as well as A, may bag them all if he can, and A has no redress. Game is the legal property of any man with a licence, provided he can catch it on his own field. Piggy is not.'

Alfred wisely dropped the subject for the present; and I said: 'You undertake, then, to answer for my admission to your party to-morrow?'

'Certainly,' replied he; 'only, mind, you don't mistake a fox for a hare; you had better by half shoot a beater. They don't hunt them.'

'Not here,' said Uncle Richard; 'but when Alfred stepped into the troop-ship which landed him last month at Southampton, he had been hunting nothing else for six months. And now,' continued he, knocking the ashes out of his pipe, 'it is twelve o'clock, and if you young fellows want to hold straight to-morrow, though it be only at tame pheasants, you had better not smoke all night.'

So we dissolved the assembly, and went to bed, being kept awake some time by silence, for I missed the Londoner's lullaby—the incessant metallic monotone of wheel and granite. I tried to think myself to sleep, by reflecting on the treacherous security in which our neighbour's pheasants now slept on the guarded branches of the game-cover. Night after night, armed men had kept watch over their slumbers; no sentinel ever caught with quicker ear the footfall of the enemy's picket, than those who now listened for the poacher's step, and all in order that the objects of such vigilance might be shot—a curious illustration of the conservative and destructive tendencies of the mind. Now-a-days, the contest of the home sportsman is not with the quick senses and natural instinct of the animal; there is little of that: the science lies in outwitting the poacher, and excelling the neighbouring squire. The object is to kill instead of the one, and more than the other. The animal itself has no chance—is no more considered than the ball and the stumps at cricket. Sport like this is surely of a degenerate kind. In partridge-shooting, the training of the dog is not an unworthy triumph; at anyrate, it teaches patience; but these unlucky pheasants are kept to be slaughtered without calling out a single faculty which might not be developed by shooting at a succession of turnips, with their tops on, thrown over your head. But I will spare you, reader, these philosophical reflections, lest they have the same effect on you that they produced on me; for, in the middle, I fell asleep, and dreamed that Uncle Richard was hanged in the midst of a crowd of pheasants, turkeys, and Cochin China, at Hungerford Market, for poisoning the chairman of the quarter-sessions with snapdragon, on Boxing-day.

The next morning was perfect. A stray summer-day had slipped out of its place, and got, by mistake, into the winter procession. The few patches of snow that still remained slunk silently off, while every twig and twisted coil of bark in the neighbouring rookery shewed stiff and sharp cut as in a stereoscopic picture. But you should have seen the rooks—how thoroughly they enjoyed it; there was not a battered veteran among them but tumbled about in the sunshine, and assisted with glad heart in the general palaver.

Leaving the rooks at high jinks, Alfred and I set off at half-past nine to the Spinny. There we found the squire, a good specimen of the middle-aged country-gentleman, with velvet shooting-coat, short irascible hair, well-brushed beaver-hat, stumpy manners, and a hearty shake of the hand. With him were eight or ten other sportsmen, each attended by a man

Friday, bearing a second double-gun and spare ammunition. Hard by, there waited a mob of some fifty or sixty tatterdemalions, armed with staves. These were the beaters, who were to be employed in starting and driving the game. Every idler in and near the place rejoiced in his office, and no doubt it had many charms. First, there was the fun, pure and simple; next, the additional sensation of freedom and outlawry in yelling and laying about with a big stick in the sacred precincts of the game-cover; then the triumph of being rewarded for what on another day would have been a serious misdemeanour; then the chance of a rabbit at least for a pie; then the shelter of the squire's necessities against the perils of playing truant from home, school, or work; lastly, the opportunity of unlimited 'chaff' and possible beer. Who could resist the accumulated attractions? So the scapegraces, and men out of work, and poachers off duty, put on their raggedest breeches, and proffered their services to the squire *en masse*.

Uncle Richard, who, with Herbert, accompanied us to look on and criticise, called them Constable's Miscellany.

Lowrie the keeper, commanding in chief, having explained the plan of operations, stationed the sportsmen about sixty yards from each other round one end of the wood, and led the miscellany to the other. Then spreading out in line, they entered the sloop, as the thick brushwood is called, and began whistling, knocking their sticks against the trees, and hollering, as they moved slowly towards the expectant shooters. These stood still and silent as statues. I was placed at a corner; a clay-ditch half full of water and rotting leaves divided me from the wood, into which—the high grass having now decayed and fallen—I could see about fifteen yards. The bank was honey-combed with rabbit-holes, stopped for the occasion with sods of turf, lest the rabbits, which might be driven out of the wood, should pop in before they could be shot.

Everything was quite still, for the beaters were yet a long way off. A robin sat on a spray close by, and looked sideways at me with his round bright eye, wondering, no doubt, why I stood there so mute and motionless; presently he spied a worm, pounced on it, then, with a sudden gobbling effort, swallowed it whole, waited for a moment, as if to feel whether it had gone to the right place, and flipped off.

Soon the shouts of the beaters were distinctly heard, breaking out in chorus now and then at different points along their line, as some hare or rabbit tried to turn back. As yet, however, nothing had presented itself to be shot. 'Ha! what is this?' thought I, as a dark-looking object came running through the sloop towards me as fast as a dog. Before I knew whether to shoot at it or not, it suddenly sprang up with an effect as if an umbrella had been opened smack in my face, and a rocket fired between my legs at the same time.

Yes, reader, if you are a sportsman, and can recollect your sensations the first time a cock-pheasant rose at your feet, you will not be surprised to hear that I fired both barrels at it before it was ten yards off, cut a thickish sapling in twain thereby, and saw the brute fly off in gorgeous triumph. While I was recovering from this surprise, and loading my gun, a hare sat down on the top of the bank, cocked one ear, waited till I broke my ramrod, and then cantered off with a great display of tail and hinder-quarters. Having been advised to take a spare loading-rod of Alfred's with me, I now drew it out of the button-hole in which I had stuck it swordwise, finished the ramming home of my charge, and was ready again. Next came two rabbits head and ears into the ditch before I had time to put my gun to my shoulder. Nettled at this, I soon revenged myself on a hare which was stealing silently through the wood. It was not long, however, before I found that these few chances

were but the opening of the sport, otherwise I had begun to think that, after all, preserve-shooting was not so great a scene of sheer slaughter as I fancied it would be. The dropping shot from the line of sportsmen, who had now all closed in round the corner of the wood, grew into a smart fusillade; each man fired as fast as his attendant could hand him a recharged gun. The line of beaters moved towards us, hares and rabbits squatting down in desperation, or running wildly out, sometimes even against one another. Mixed with them were a parcel of terrified squirrels; while the pheasants, shut in between two rows of enemies, rose in scores with a flutter like the final bouquet of fireworks at Cremorne Gardens. It seemed as if, once accustomed to the noise, no one could help knocking something down, even if he had only flung his powder-flask among them.

Presently, the beaters emerged, pushing the brushwood aside with their hands as they forced their way out of the sloop. The slain having been gathered up, we passed on to the long copses, where the same tactics were pursued—another mob of animals hemmed up in a corner, and shot down in heaps; some tumbling over, or falling with a thud, riddled at close quarters, dead as mutton; others maimed, and wriggling off somehow, to be picked up quite thin, perhaps a week or so afterwards, unless they chanced to get their *coup de grâce* from Lowrie in his rounds the day after the sport.

'Well,' said Alfred to me, as we sat down to lunch at the keeper's lodge, 'how do you like battue-shooting, on first acquaintance?'

'It is much what I expected,' I replied; 'and can quite understand the answer of the Duke of Wellington when the same question was once put to him: "Like it! I never was in such danger in my life."'

'You have reason to be gratified, though,' said Alfred, 'for you didn't happen to shoot a beater, and providentially missed a fox.'

An anxious look came into Mr Hudson's face at the utterance of this libel; and two or three of his younger hunting-friends glanced at him, as if for leave to spike my gun on the spot. 'However,' he said, good-humouredly, 'at any rate, you have shown more discrimination than a foreign friend of mine, who came here one September to shoot. He went out early the next morning on his own account, and produced, at breakfast, among other things, two or three robins, a rook, and a water-rat. Next day, he killed a little pig in some standing barley.'

'Ah! I remember,' joined in another of our party; 'he shot in straps, and a horn; somebody, too, found a roll of lint in his pocket.'

'Yes; I believe he expected an ambulance to accompany the expedition,' said Alfred, lighting a cigar, and handing his case to Lowrie, who took one out cautiously, as if he were drawing lots for a heavy prize, and then put it into his pocket, along with his knife.

Luncheon ended, the remainder of the daylight was devoted to the Home Wood. Here we had at first some glade-shooting, the most dangerous of all, when the glades are straight. A lane is cut through the wood, about as wide as the foot-pavement of Piccadilly, and the 'guns' are stationed along it, necessarily in line, so that whoever shoots at an animal in the open space, shoots towards his neighbour at the same time. Of course, nobody ought to fire down the glade while Smith is standing there, fifty yards off, in profile, and expectation; nor ought he to wheel suddenly about, and shoot straight at you. But so truly did my 'next man' hold his piece towards me once or twice, that the flash from the muzzle of his gun hid his face for the moment. The animal aimed at was, however, low down upon the ground, so that the shots struck short of myself, or only pattered among the dry leaves at my feet.

This being the home-cover, the pheasants appeared more tame and numerous than ever. Many of them



had been brought up by Lowrie in coops round his cottage, and would gather together at his whistle. The 'bag' made here was immense, and a cart carried off most of it to the station for the London market, after enough had been reserved for presents and the larder.

I asked Alfred afterwards how many days' shooting the covers we had beaten would provide in the course of the season.

'Not above three or four,' said he, 'if that. The poachers have most sport; they never miss a favourable night; but Hudson himself has hardly ever a chance in his own woods. Of course, when he invites a party to shoot, he thinks more about their entertainment than his own, and it is seldom any great game-preserver goes out wood-shooting by himself. Such as you and I have the fun; Hudson pays for it.'

'Dearly, too, I dare say,' I replied.

'Dearly!' said Alfred. 'Every pheasant shot to-day costs him gold, and Heaven knows how much derangement of the liver. You have no idea of the pains endured about game. What with the day-nurses and the night-nurses, it takes as much trouble to rear as a family of sick children, who all die of infanticide. You feed and watch it; then your neighbours, with or without invitation, cock both barrels, and knock it over.'

'Is there much poaching about here?' I said.

'Ask Lowrie: I don't suppose he has had ten whole nights in bed during the season.'

'Well,' I exclaimed, 'I rather wonder at the excess to which the business is carried. I suppose it acts as a sort of wholesome work to master and man.'

'Not a bit,' said Alfred; 'Hudson is hated by heaps of the poor people, and Lowrie will probably be shot.'

This is too true a summary of the state in which many of our quiet villages are now. We walked for some time in silence, Alfred smoking a brier-root pipe, and I thinking how many bad passions pleasure contrives to plant in the country, and how vigorously they thrive.

We passed by a homestead where the cattle, knee-deep in warm straw, stood munching fodder from open yard-racks. Clean sliced haystacks caught the now level sun, and a flight of rustling pigeons circled about the barn, waiting for supper.

'Look at that fellow,' said Alfred, pointing to a man walking across the yard with a pail in each hand, and followed by a tail of inquisitive, querulous pigs. 'That fellow has worked on this farm, man and boy, sixty years; and last week, his lad Jack, as he calls him—a married man with five children—was sent to prison for snaring a hare which ate the vegetables in his cottage-garden.'

'Ay,' I replied, 'it is one case of hundreds. It is a pleasant possibility in a rustic's life. When a boy, he "keeps birds" in a field, wet and dry, crouched under such shelter as he can find, or, if ingenious, make—a hut, may be, of weeds and sticks weighted with stones and sods—worse than a dog-kennel. Then he is advanced to be a sower and a reaper. The wealth of the land passes through his hands; he sees the fruit of his labours carried off. In an evil hour and a dark night, he catches the thief who eats his poor garden-stuff. Pussy squeaks. John the watcher, soured by opposition and rheumatics, informs against him, though of his own kin (for they are all cousins here), and he gets committed for a fortnight. Meanwhile, he being then in durance, with his hair cut short, and his soul shamed, I myself, without a licence, without a twinge, incur legal guilt enough, if distributed, to fill a jail. He, with a dumb stupid consciousness of having worked like a man for his daily bread, tries to think what it all means, generalises rapidly, repudiates the justice of his sentence, and hates the squire and the parson. When he comes out, and goes back to his bullocks again—he

calls them *his*, so true is the interest he takes in them, though he never touches beef, except alive—when he returns to his bullocks, he brings back a somewhat dangerous fire in his heart, banked up for the present, but a deep, silent, coal-mine fire, of a spreading sort, too, eating its way into the dark peasant-soul of his.'

'Whew!' cried Alfred. 'In the name of the Prophet, fi-i-i-i-i-g-gs!' and he shouted so loud in his irreverence, that the old man stopped in the middle of pouring out a pail of swill into the hog-trough, and looked round. 'Hollo!' continued Alfred; 'and pray, what must we do? Shall we sell our guns, buy therewith the best library edition of Carlyle, become seers of our own intellectual indigestion, and sit at home doing nothing but simmer about "reality" and the French Revolution!'

'Peace, blasphemer!' I cried. 'No, I would not have you sit at home doing nothing. As for Carlyle, whatever he has said true, will remain so; and what not, will pass away.'

'Well, then,' replied he, 'should we botanise only? or go pupa-digging with neat trowel and pill-boxes? or should we take constitutionals in great-coats and sticks, with American overshoes? Please, let me off *them*. I always feel when I put them on as if I were treading on frogs.'

'No,' said I, 'I would not have you give up manly sports, not even game-shooting. A good day's walk after partridge or grouse can do no one harm. It isn't that which riles the poor man. You exchange many a pleasant greeting with him in the field; give him largess; pass on sincerely capped. Moreover, however plentiful birds may be, there is an open-air, fair-play sort of look about partridge-shooting; and then, as the season gets on, you really have to look sharp to fill a bag. It is this cover-shooting, as now practised, this helpless game-driving, this hot-house cultivation of sport, which does nine-tenths of the harm attributed to the game-laws. When you take forty or fifty brace of lives without doing more than shift from one corner to another, as the keeper directs you, and fire guns as fast as your man can load them, there is no concealment, no strength, no strategy, no exercise of instinct required, nothing but the mechanical direction of the pipe or barrel of a "fire" engine. It isn't sport at all. Take anything else—hunting, fly-fishing, trolling, or what you will—there is place for skill, there is at least wholesome exercise for the body; but here, you stand stiff, sure to find, sure to kill. Such and such a movement, a certain result; the only excitement is the noise and the chance of being shot. If not for this, you might as well—having prepared sufficient suction-apparatus and handles—invite your friends to a day's pumping, adding in your note that the head-plumber assured you the wells were full, and that there was every prospect of your making a good "bucket." At any rate, I am persuaded that the laws of trespass would be quite sufficient to preserve game enough for shooting. There would be no lack of it in the market, for it might be bred like other fowls. Make pheasants no longer game, and they will become poultry, run about farmyards, and grow fat at the barn-door. As it is, they are domesticated by the keeper, and would only have to be handed over to the farmer's wife.'

'Delightful!' said Alfred. 'They might be fed on bread-sauce in little troughs.'

In the conversation that evening, Uncle Richard basely deserted the colours he had run up so smartly the night before, and argued in favour of the heavy slaughter at battues. It was only, he said, an illustration of the thorough way in which Englishmen did what they did. The object of the sportsman, he said, was to kill; the use of the gamekeeper was to produce as many victims as possible. The system which brought together most guns and most game under

circumstances in which the first could be used with the surest effect, and the second least likely to escape, was the best. A battue was a triumph in the art of shooting game.

I was about to reply, when Alfred denied his premises. 'The object of the sportsman,' he said, 'is not simply to kill. He does not fire into the middle of a covey; he does not shoot a pheasant feeding by a wheatstack, or a hare sitting on its form: he takes a pride in letting the beast have its natural chance of escape, on wing or foot, and then executing it neatly.'

'Then,' replied Uncle Richard, 'I retract my sentence, and pronounce the opportunities of a battue to be trying to the soul of a true sportsman, and the scene only fit for a poulterer.'

'You will allow, I suppose,' said Alfred, 'that this winter-sport does good in keeping country gentlemen at home; without attraction of this kind, they would be in London.'

'I don't believe it,' he replied; 'if I did, they might shoot one another for all they were worth. They preserve to please their boys at Eton and Oxford; because it is the fashion; because they have begun when young, and don't like to leave off. Many of them would be glad enough of a fair excuse for giving it up. I expect these rifle corps will divert much of the sporting steam, and make peace between some of the poachers and young squires. They will learn to respect one another. Open honest rivalry will often take the place of ill-will and opposition. Men who have spirit to join a rifle corps, will not kill their officers' game; and Captain the Honourable Enfield Broadlands won't persecute the crack-shots of his company.'

'Well, I believe,' I said, 'this rifle force will make more good blood than it will shed; whether it keeps Frenchmen at a respectful distance or not, it already brings Englishmen together, and that is wanted, I fear, more than some of us think.'

Next morning, I returned to town; and as I sat in the corner of one of the new roomy carriages at last put on the Eastern Counties line, I read in the *Times* of fresh places where country gentlemen were subscribing to fit out the smartest labourers on their estates with arms and uniform, and hoped that our friend Hudson would find some other vent for the sporting tendencies of his mob of beaters, than in only hiring them to skirmish for his own sport, and tempting them to poach for themselves.

### THE FAMILIAR LETTER-WRITER A CENTURY AGO.

OUR socio-ethical literature—the literature of *manners*—is tolerably rich in *Complete Letter-writers*. The main part of these are very ordinary productions; they abound in such set and conventional expressions as: 'I have received your *favour* of the 9th'—the said *favour* being possibly an offence; 'I *beg* to intimate,' from a rich man to a needy petitioner; 'Permit me to inform you,' from a domineering fellow who never takes a denial. I have before me, however, a better kind of guide for letter-writers; it was published in 1754, and intended for the subjects of King George II., hence, apart from its primary and original purpose, it has now a kind of social and historical interest, similar to that of the comedies, novels, and biographies of the period. It gives us a glimpse into manners as they really were, as well as into manners as they should be. The title is, *Familiar Letters on Various Subjects of Business and Amusement*. It is dedicated to the Bishop of Worcester. Its purpose is, 'to form the style of the younger part of both sexes, and, by conveying entertainment with moral instruction, to inculcate in them an early taste

for epistolary correspondence.' It is likewise intended to serve as 'a proper model for all kinds of letters, for the use of those persons who are desirous of writing correct English and good sense on every occasion.' The volume exhibits, at least, a lively and pleasant fancy, and indeed reminds us of the novels of the period, which were invariably—Fielding's alone excepted—in the form of a series of letters.

There are altogether one hundred and sixty-three letters in the volume; these are sorted into five Books, each Book containing a different class of letters. In Book the First, which contains eleven letters only, a kind of moral tale is developed, looking exceedingly like a fiction. A youth, whose father is dead, is sent up to London to stay with a relation, and to choose some trade or profession to which 'he would be bred.' His elder brother is constituted by their mother in *loco parentis*, and the boy in London expresses the most extraordinary reverence for his big brother in the country. In letter 1, he describes to the latter his feelings on parting with their mother; in letter 2, he discourses on letter-writing, deploring his own ineptitude in that art, and says that he has bought 'two or three volumes of *Familiar Epistles*.' He informs us that he cannot write good English in the most faultless sentences, and expresses to admiration his inability to express himself. Letter 3 is an excellent epistle from the big brother; in it he discourses on the art of correspondence, advising his junior to throw his *Familiar Epistles* into the fire, and to 'keep to nature, for nature always pleases. Writing should be like conversation: what is natural, is proper.' Letter 4 continues the instructions. The next letters are expressions of love and obedience between mother and son, and rather heavy; but letter 7 is 'concerning a lady.' The boy in London has been smitten. He went to 'see a person perform some feats of dexterity upon a wire,' and there beheld a person 'superior to all her sex.' He should be happy with her upon a little. He has written a letter to her, but forwards it to his brother before sending it. The next few epistles are upon this 'imprudent courtship,' which is at last given up. The book winds up with letter 11, in which the youth 'determines to what profession he will be bred.'

He will not be a merchant, because 'bad men are common' in it. 'There remain only the three genteel professions. *The gown* I fear to think of.' 'It is those who would be hanged out of the church, that come to the red hat and dignities within it. I do not, brother, suppose that in our church so much ill is practised as in the Romish; but I see a man of virtue and of learning traversing the streets at six in a morning, to read prayers for sixpence; and a rosy dean almost breaking the springs of his chariot, who never did one single good thing in the church.' He will not be a physician, because the quacks, and not the wise and learned, 'succeed.' But he will be a lawyer, because it seems 'the only road of life in which a man will rise according to his merit.' And with this choice this little biography closes; the younger correspondent subscribing himself, 'Dear and truly honoured brother, your most affectionate and most humble servant.'

The Second Book is made up of letters upon 'Ordinary Matters,' from persons in all stations and conditions, and contains between eighty and ninety of these epistles. In this Book, the letter-writer of a century ago is taught how to quarrel; how to adjust a difference, and send a submission; how to borrow money, if a rich man; how, if a poor man; how to lend money; how to refuse it; how to ask all kinds of favours; how to acknowledge them; how to beg a place from a 'person of quality'; how, if a person of quality, to refuse; how to introduce a stranger of merit; how to make sudden demands; how to meet unexpected demands; how to invite a friend into the country, 'not without a design; how to advise a

young man to get married; how to play the father—every kind of father—when a daughter is asked in marriage; how to thank a father for his daughter; how to conduct offers and refusals of partnership; how servant-maids in London should write to their fathers in the country, if courted by the 'prentice; how apprentices should write to rich uncles, when they have married without said uncles' leave; how uncles should answer; how footmen who have been dishonest should write to their parents. There are also model letters from all kinds of male relations to all kinds of female ones; on 'listening to the addresses' of people 'beneath them; on 'receiving the visits of gentlemen, their intended husbands, imprudently; letters on characters of servants; cautions from the country fathers to the London sons against public-houses; and letters from young men at the universities, borrowing money.

The Third Book contains 'Letters of Love and Courtship.' There are only sixteen of these. An apprentice nearly out of his time writes to a father, and asks permission to 'pay his addresses' to his youngest daughter, detailing his expectations. The father answers favourably. He intends to give each of his girls a thousand pounds, and a hundred for clothes. One smiles to see how the editor can make a young fellow happy or miserable for life with one drop of ink. Thus four of the letters are taken up with a correspondence between a gentleman who fell in love with 'a lady of superior fortune,' whom he saw at a public oratorio, and a friend of the said lady. The gentleman entreates an introduction. The lady's friend answers that 'Mrs (understand Miss) J. has so universal an acquaintance, that I should think it could not be difficult for any man of fashion to find the way of being introduced to her without this extraordinary method.' To this failure of the gentleman of no fortune, succeeds the prosperous correspondence of a gentleman of some fortune with the mother of a lady whom he saw and was smitten by 'at the rehearsal at St Paul's.' This is followed by an equally successful brace of letters, on a like occasion, between 'persons in trade.' Then come a batch of letters between ladies and gentlemen who suspect each other of infidelity; who have been seen by third parties talking earnestly with rivals; who determine never to see each other again; who repent, and promise to call early the next day.

Book the Fourth takes us from this warm region into a cool one: it contains 'Letters of Politeness and Ceremony.' Here, the eighteenth century letter-writer was peculiarly at home. Not all the centuries before it, nor the one after it, have been so polite and ceremonious. Thus, a singular exaggeration of expression, which we should be apt to take for sarcasm in our day, is the characteristic of all these model epistles. Take letter 110; it is 'from a Lady to an Acquaintance who had gone home late the night before.' 'I have been,' she writes, 'in concern about you the whole night, and cannot deny myself the satisfaction of sending to know how you do. I kept you too late, and I have been in one continual uneasiness ever since. I beg to know whether I may pardon myself for pressing you too much; for if you have suffered but in the least degree by it, I never shall.' So in letter 113, 'from a Lady who was offered Tickets, but was engaged, and could not accept them.' 'I think myself very unhappy,' says the said lady, 'that I cannot be at the concert.' How unhappy the gentleman must have been to lose the lady's company may be inferred from the hints given us in letter 119 of the tremendous social value, the intrinsic splendour of some ladies of that epoch. The epistle is supposed to invite a lady to a 'party of pleasure.' I just give the commencement of it. 'DEAR MADAM—People are interested who invite you to be of their parties, because you are sure to make them agreeable. This is a reason, perhaps, why you will not always comply

when you are asked to be of them, but it is certainly a cause of your being solicited oftener than any other woman in the world.' True, the momentary sense we have that this anonymous lady was a rare being, is somewhat checked as we remember that this is a model letter, and that thousands of gentlemen of that time sent these same words to thousands of ladies. Company, indeed, seems to have been the thing which that generation could not do without. The letters from ladies and gentlemen in the country during the town-season, and *vice versa*, throw sharp glimpses of light into their horror of that semi-monastic state. The letters, also, from country ladies to town ladies bear lively evidence of this state of feeling. I will quote a sentence or two from letter 115, 'An Invitation into the Country for the Summer.' 'There are fine prospects from the park,' says the rural demoiselle, 'and a river runs through the garden; nor are we quite out of the way of entertainment. You know there is a great deal of company about the place; and we have an assembly within a mile of us. What shall I say else to tempt you to come?'

Book the Fifth has this title, 'Miscellaneous Letters on a variety of Different and Singular Subjects.' There are very long plaints between husbands and wives of affectionate tempers, lucklessly separated by official duties on the husbands' part; also from gentlemen in the country to daughters 'who have fallen into bad ways,' and are settled 'in a fine but shameful life; and penitent answers from daughters, melted by those letters. There is a letter 'to dissuade a widow lady from a second marriage; another, 'to a gentlewoman who disturbs all companies by her peevishness; letters also on lawsuits, elections, religion, bad debts, and bad women; with a series to and from a wife 'whose husband is uneasy about her conduct.' As a model of consummate selfishness, calling itself prudence, may be taken letter 135, in which a father gives advice 'to his son in trade at the time of an approaching election.' The moral is, that a shop-keeper should have no politics. The father shews the son all the methods of slipping out of voting. 'If you find you must give a vote to one side, for fear of disobliging both, it is better to lose half your customers than to lose them all; so do it.'

Persons who have low, petty, and secondary views about government, liberty, and the nation, have not ordinarily very noble views about the highest matters of all; hence, from the letter on elections, we are quite prepared for the two last letters in the book, which are on the church. The first is from a father to a son, 'recommending the gown (!) as the most eligible method of life.' We cannot mistake the writer's hand; it is the same crafty, canny parent who gave such shrewd advice to his 'son in trade,' who here advises his younger son, 'at an academy in town.' The very title given to the priesthood shews to what a debased estimate holy orders had sunk, and how preferment was the uppermost thought with eighteenth century churchmen.

The last letter in the volume is from this same son to his father; in it he offers his 'objections against embracing the offer.' 'In London,' writes he, 'a clergyman who is unprovided for is the man of all the world most abject, most despised, and most a slave. The height of his wishes, if they have any foundation in reason, is to be the deputy of some deputy. For there are here three or four gradations under the curate, and that is a post not to be obtained without interest, possibly not without money. If he succeeds in this intention, he is a stranger to daylight. His pay will not enable him to make the appearance which his character requires. His duty calls him out only at those hours when his principal will not expose himself to the air; to read the dorking [matins] prayers at some city church to a dozen sleepy mendicants; or to read the burial-service over wretches poisoned in workhouses, and here thrown together in



holes. This, sir, I am assured you would not propose to me as eligible."

The work concludes with a moral application of the letters, which in brief is this: Never expect anything from the promises of great men, nor from the protestations of friendship; and place no dependence upon any one but yourself.

#### DR WOLFF OF BOKHARA.

IN spite of Mr Disraeli's assertions, the Jews are not the very first people on the face of the earth, although some of them have made a great deal of money. When a Jew distinguishes himself in other fashion, the world is pretty certain to hear of it, and to be astonished proportionally.

'Heaven have mercy upon us,' quoth Rabbi David of Wurtemberg, 'our son will not remain a Jew! He is continually walking about and thinking, which is not natural.' And Rabbi David, so far at least as his son Wolff was concerned, was right. At eleven years of age or so, the lad declares, 'My mind is made up; I will become a Christian, and be a Jesuit; and I will preach the gospel in foreign lands like Francis Xavier.' Whereupon his cousin and temporary guardian observes laughingly: 'You are an enthusiast;' but the cousin's wife 'grew very angry, and threw a poker at him, and cursed him, and turned him out of the house.' From that moment, Dr Wolff of Bokhara, as we English have learned subsequently to know him, had to make his own very singular way in the world. He goes to Frankfurt-on-the-Maine and Halle; then to the Benedictine monastery at Mülk, where he learns Latin, gets ten florins a week and his food, in exchange for teaching Hebrew; and afterwards to the college of Soleure. Here, sleeping in the same room at a lodging-house with a certain fellow-student, he asks one night, 'And who do you think, Biederman, I am?' 'Why, to tell you the truth,' replies the other, 'I have always suspected you of being a Berner (Protestant), for you behave so strangely at church. You sit when others stand; you kneel when others sit.' Wolff replied: "'Now I will tell you who I am.' Biederman said: 'Who are you?' Wolff replied: 'I am a Jew.' Biederman was so frightened that he screamed, and leaped out of the bed; the noise of which roused the landlord and landlady, who came robeless into the room, and said: 'What's the matter? Is the devil here among you?' Biederman exclaimed: 'Worse than that; Wolff is a Jew!'" Wolff was, however, soon afterwards baptized at Prague, receiving the name of Joseph, whereupon he removes to Vienna. He gives a curious description of the state of religious parties there (in 1813), and particularly of the Mystical Party, or Peschelites, as they were called from their leader. 'Peschel was an interpreter of the Revelation of St John; and he taught that people ought to be so inflamed by the love of Christ, that they might desire with St Paul to "know the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death." Peschel's followers took up this idea further, and insisted that Christians should continue the atonement among themselves; with which view they assembled on a Good Friday in a certain house, and cast lots for one to be crucified; and he on whom the lot fell was to be sacrificed. The lot fell, on the first occasion, upon a poor butcher's maid-servant, who actually submitted to her fate, and suffered with great fortitude and patience. But the next time it fell on a fat Roman Catholic priest,

who did not relish the thought at all; and so he gave notice to the police, who took the mystics into custody, and Wolff himself saw Peschel in prison.' Wolff, who had now become a great linguist, and a convert of some considerable mark, is sent to Rome to the College of the Propaganda, where, whatever he learned, it does not appear to have been a modest humility. 'On the day of Epiphany, the pupils gave an "academia" in forty-two languages. It was in the evening. All the ambassadors were present, and all the cardinals, and the German artists, and French priests. Wolff spoke in five languages, and chanted so that the hall rang; and all the auditors were in raptures, and applauded him; and the Italian collegians of the different colleges present kept saying: "Look at him—look at him, what tremendous eyes he makes!" (*Guardate! guardate! gli occhi che fa!*) After the whole was over, the servants of the cardinals, together with their masters, slapped his back, and said: "*Per Bacco, per Bacco! che voce! che voce! che occhi! che occhi!*"

'An Armenian bishop said: "His voice goes up above the heavens."'

Wolff has likewise the honour of an interview with Pope Pius VII., whom he 'pats on the shoulder gently and caressingly;' but the discipline of the church does not altogether take his fancy, nevertheless. 'Every Friday evening, they assembled in a dark room, put out the candles, and then every one flagellated himself. Wolff attempted to join in this self-discipline; but he gave himself only one stroke, and then administered all the other blows to his leather trousers, which were pushed down to his knees, and it made a loud sound. The others, observing this device, laughed very heartily, and several of them afterwards followed Wolff's example—especially one who stood near the wall, and gave it also the benefit of the lash.

Finally, Wolff concludes that he is not adapted for a monastic life, and departs for England, to his friend the late Mr Henry Drummond, who had invited him to do so long before. According to the doctor's account, almost everybody was in raptures with him about this time, and indeed this is more or less the case throughout the biography. As he stops on his way to London at Geneva, three old acquaintances chance to meet him, and immediately express their satisfaction in this singular manner. They all exclaimed at once: '*Cher Wolff! Cher Wolff! Enfant de la Nature! Enfant de la Providence! Enfant de Jésus Christ!*' Robert Haldane accompanied him from Paris to Mr Drummond's, through whom he is introduced to Mr Lewis Way, a gentleman whose history is extraordinary. 'He was a barrister of small fortune, when one day, as he was walking in a street in London, he met by chance with an old gentleman, with whom he entered into conversation, whose name also was Lewis Way, and who invited the barrister, Lewis Way, to dinner. They became friends; and soon afterwards that old man died, and left to the barrister L.390,000, with the condition that he should employ it for the glory of God. Lewis Way immediately took holy orders in the Church of England; and his design was to devote his life to the conversion of the Jewish nation, and the promotion of their welfare, temporal and spiritual.' This gentleman, hearing of the existence of a Society, composed of churchmen and dissenters, for the promotion of Christianity among the Jews, already, pays its debts (amounting to L.20,000), upon condition that the dissenters should retire, and leave the whole management to churchmen. 'They accepted his terms, and he took sixteen Jews into his house, and baptized them all; but soon after their baptism, they stole his silver spoons, and one of them was transported to Australia for having forged Mr Way's signature.' Poor Mr Way suffers much at the hands of Dr Wolff's fellow-countrymen; his pet Jew, 'one Nehemiah Solomon, a young man of great talents, whose

heard he had shaved off, getting ordained a priest only to run off with L.300 of the Society's money. 'Nothing, however, disturbed Lewis Way, and soon after he went to Palestine; but there he was shamefully deceived by a Mount Lebanon Christian, and was so distressed by the circumstance, that it made him burst into tears; yet he continued his operations among the Jews with the same earnestness as ever. But neither his character nor his services were appreciated as they ought to have been, even by his own countrymen, and his fine spirit was chafed by the indifference and ingratitude of common men; and at last the dear man died at Leamington, broken-hearted.'

Wolff himself is sent to Cambridge, at the expense of the Society already mentioned, and is eventually appointed its missionary among his own people in Palestine. The simplicity and even pusillanimity exhibited by our author in little matters, curiously contrasts with his proved common sense and dauntless courage in affairs of life and death. At Cairo, Santini, an Italian, 'was not a nice man; he cheated Wolff by making him believe that the best present one can give to a Bedouin chief is a small bottle of castor-oil. So Wolff bought from him some hundred bottles for L.10, which made all the English people laugh from Cairo to England.' Wolff also seems to have been a good deal imposed upon by his own servants, for we read in another portion of this remarkable biography: \* 'Wolff hired four camels, upon which he loaded those Bibles which had been sent to him from Bombay for distribution on the journey; and he hired two Persian servants, both of them tremendous rogues; for Wolff never had the good-fortune to meet with a good servant, except on his second journey to Bokhara, in the year 1843, when he took a Russian with him from Constantinople to Tabreez, who actually behaved very well the whole journey. But when they arrived at Tabreez, he became so drunk that he thrashed his master, and would have most seriously injured him, if Mr Bonham had not knocked him down. Wolff, however, would still have taken him on to Bokhara, after he became sober, if he would have promised not to get drunk again. But he said he never would promise such a thing, as he was determined to get drunk whenever the feast of the Holy Virgin Mary was celebrated. So Wolff dismissed him.' He was dependent upon servants to an extraordinary degree for so self-helpful a man, in the matter of shaving; he could not even use the razor-strop, and narrates how Irving the preacher shaved him every morning while he stayed with him; and how that he found no barber at the archbishop's palace at Tuam, but was shaved there by an old woman, who demanded two shillings and sixpence for the job.

At Jerusalem, Wolff fell in with many interesting legends concerning his own people, who received him with very various feelings. Here is an affecting incident said to have occurred soon after the destruction of that city by Titus. 'Two heathen merchants met together in an inn in the Desert. "I have a male slave," said one to the other, "the like to whose beauty is not to be seen in the whole world." And the other said: "I have a female slave, the like of whose beauty is not to be seen in the whole world." Then they agreed to marry these two together, and to divide the children between them; and in the evening both the slaves were brought into a room. One stood in one corner, and the other in the other corner, and the male slave said: "I, a priest, and the son of a high-priest, should I marry a slave?" and the female said in the other corner of the room: "I, a priestess, the daughter of a high-priest, should I marry a slave?" and when the morning approached, they discovered that they were brother and sister. They fell upon each other's necks, and wept, and wept, and wept, until

the souls of both departed. And it is on account of this that Jeremiah said: "Over these I weep, I weep; mine eye, mine eye runs down with water."

The following Jewish account of Solomon, invented, perhaps, to do away with the scandals attaching to that monarch's reputation, reads like a chapter out of the *Arabian Nights*. 'Solomon had in his power one of the apostate angels, Ashmeday by name, whom he carried about in a chain, like a dog. One day, Solomon said to him: "How entirely I have got you in my power!" Ashmeday replied to him: "Only let me loose for a little moment, and then you will see what I can do!"

'Solomon granted his request, and Ashmeday gave him such a kick that he was flung many thousand miles from his own country, and wandered about as a beggar in all the countries of the earth. During his absence, Ashmeday reigned in Jerusalem, and sat upon Solomon's throne, in the very figure and shape of Solomon. And it was not Solomon who had one thousand wives, but Ashmeday, in the figure of Solomon; and it was not Solomon who committed idolatry, but Ashmeday, in the figure of Solomon; and it was not Solomon who oppressed the people, but Ashmeday, in the figure of Solomon.

'At last, after many years, Solomon returned from his wanderings, when he found Ashmeday sitting upon his throne, in his very figure. Then he said: "I am Solomon, and thou art a deceiver!" And Ashmeday said: "I am Solomon, and thou art a deceiver!"

'They appealed to the great Sanhedrim. The Sanhedrim decided that some one should examine the feet of both; and it was found out that Solomon the exile had the feet of a man, but Ashmeday the feet of a cock. So they expelled Ashmeday from the throne by the ineffable name, and he was again put in chains by the authentic Solomon.'

It must not be supposed, however, that the subject of this biography is always meeting with humorous adventures, or listening to romantic legends. The work he was set to do was no child's play. The Sabæans, for example, must have been an unsatisfactory tribe to attempt the conversion of, unless Wolff was more successful than his predecessor in that endeavour, Father Agadangelus, the Roman Catholic missionary. That gentleman 'actually baptized the whole body of them. But on the Sunday following, he relates that he sent spies to that river, and all of them were being baptized again in their own way. He asked: "Why they had been baptized again?" They replied: "We like water." He asked: "Are you not Roman Catholics?" They replied: "We will be, on the following conditions: First, the pope must write to the Sultan for us to be relieved from tribute; secondly, the pope must give us a pension; thirdly, at the hour of death, no Roman Catholic priest must come near us; fourthly, we must be allowed to retain our own religion unmolested!"

The Kurds must have had rather an unpleasant way with them, for when Wolff ventured to speak of religion, they tied the poor missionary down, and administered two hundred lashes on the soles of his feet. His own people gave him poison at Jerusalem, from the effects of which he did not recover for a year. He escaped from pirates at Mount Athos in his shirt alone, and after the endurance of the greatest hardships; and he was only saved from the murderers of the Desert by their persuasion that he and his company were stricken with the Plague. Finally, on his way to Bokhara, upon rejoining his little band of followers after a short absence, he beholds a terrible spectacle. 'His servant and all the rest were already tied to the horses' tails of the banditti who surrounded them. All these prisoners had been stripped entirely naked; and at last one of the robbers rode up to Wolff, with a countenance of hell, and a gun in his hand, with a smoking torch upon it, and he continually

\*The Travels and Adventures of Dr Wolff. Saunders and Otley.



exclaimed: "Pool, pool!" which means "Money, money!" Wolff gave his purse to him, and he said: "Have you more money?" Wolff answered: "Yes, in my trunk." Then he said: "When my companions come, don't tell them that I have taken your money, for those horrid fiends, the Kerahe, rob among themselves again." At last the whole troop rode up to Wolff, yelling: "Pool, pool, pool!" Wolff said: "I have given my money into the hands of this fellow." They then gave their companion a tremendous beating, and took the money from him. Then they said to Wolff: "Now, you dismount." He obeyed; when they stripped him naked, like Adam and Eve when they were created, and tied him with a long rope to a horse's tail; and one with a whip came behind and flogged him. Wolff prayed!—in such hours, one learns to pray.

Wolff's servant was valued at ten tomauns (equal to L.5), but his master was not esteemed by any means so highly. The robbers observed: 'We don't like this fellow at all; he stares at us so.' One of them said: 'He is worth five tomauns;' but another replied: 'No; I would not give half that price for him.' At last, upon his demanding to be sent to the terrible Abbas Mirza—in whose pay these wretches were—they dared not kill him openly, but contrived this Mazeppa-like method of torturing him. 'They observed that he was not a good horseman, and as the road was dreadfully hilly, they put him upon a very wild horse, without either saddle or bridle, and with only a halter to hold on by; and that horrid scoundrel, Hassan Khan's son, rode behind Wolff, and whipped the horse, and did all in his power to make it restive. Nevertheless, Wolff sat on his horse like the colonel of a regiment; and as he had learned a little of the theory of riding on horseback when at the university of Tübingen in 1815, he now brought those rules into practice.' At nightfall, naked and chained to fifty of his companions in the like plight, Hassan Khan Coord, the leader of the banditti, remarks by way of 'good-night,' 'Now you are comfortable.' After infinite miseries, Wolff is brought to the palace of the great khan, 'where he saw hundreds of miserable wretches with their eyes cut out, and their ears and noses cut off. And he was introduced into the presence of Muhammad Iszhak Khan, of whom it is related that he had killed, with his own hand, his father, mother, brother, sister, and son-in-law; and so awful was his bodily strength, that he would sometimes take hold of a prisoner, and tear his skull in two. This tyrant had sold 60,000 Persians, people of his own religion, and subjects of his own king, to the kings of Bokhara and Khiva, who were enemies to both his religion and country. Muhammad Iszhak Khan was eating his dinner when Wolff approached him, and he said: "Abbas Mirza has written to me that thou goest about to shew to the nations the way of truth. For my part, I have no religion. I have already passed this world and the other world. I have got, however, one good quality, and that is, I am a man of justice; I love strict justice; and therefore, tell me the truth, and you shall see my justice. How much money have these rascals taken from you?"

'Wolff said: "They have taken from me eighty tomauns."

'He repeated: "Eighty tomauns?"

'Wolff replied: "Yes."

'He then said: "Now thou shalt see my justice."

So he instantly ordered Hassan Khan Coord and all his followers to be dreadfully flogged. He extorted from them every farthing; and after he had got back Wolff's money, he counted it, and said: "Now thou shalt see my justice;" and putting the money into his own pocket, without giving Wolff a single penny, he added: "Now you may go in peace."

With his arrival at Bokhara, this first volume of Wolff's biography closes, and he has not informed us

at what time we are to look for a second. To judge, however, by this instalment, we may say that no life of missionary yet—excepting, perhaps, Mr Huc's—has been more interesting, nor, most certainly, half so amusing. The present vicar of Ile Brewers, and son-in-law of the Earl of Orford, has had an experience of life which falls to the lot of few, and is well worth recording.

#### SMOOTHING THE RUFFLES.

IN the early morning of a November day, in 1856, the good ship *William Beckett*, a screw-steamer of 300 tons burden, left Copenhagen very heavily laden with corn, principally in bulk. When off the Skaw (a light-house at the northern promontory of Jütland, marking the point of separation between the Kattegat and the Skager-rack), on the evening of the same day, she experienced very bad weather, and began to ship large quantities of water. This gradually increased till two o'clock on the morning of the 11th, when the water extinguished the fires, and the engines ceased working. Every exertion was made to keep the poor ship afloat; and the boats were ordered to be kept in readiness for any contingency. At length, on the forenoon of the 12th, a Danish schooner was descried lying to, about eight miles to leeward; and a question arose, whether the boats could be safely rowed this distance over a savage sea. It was then that the captain called to mind a story once told him of the effects of oil in lulling the waves: how that an old fisherman, when running his smack before a heavy sea, had made a practice of towing a loose bag or net filled with fish-bones, skin, and other greasy garbage.

Let us see what this means, and what evidence can be collected on the subject. So far back as the time of the Romans, Pliny the naturalist had something to say concerning the action of oil in calming the surface of the sea. He said that the divers of those days were accustomed to pour a little oil on the water, as a means of enabling them to see to the bottom; the oil lessened the ruffling of the surface, and permitted the rays of light to penetrate less interruptedly. Whether in those days, or during the middle ages, navigators adopted a similar means of facilitating the progress of their vessels, is not well known; but in modern times, the instances of this have been numerous. In Martin's *Account of the Western Islands*, published in 1703, the author says: 'The steward of Kilda, who lives in Pab Bay, is accustomed, in time of a storm, to tie a bundle of puddings, made of the fat of sea-fowl, to the end of his cable, and let it fall into the sea behind the rudder; this hinders the waves from breaking, and calms the sea.' It was known, in the middle of the last century, that the divers in the Mediterranean were accustomed to take a little oil in their mouths before diving, and to allow it to escape when they had descended to a certain depth; the oil rose to the surface, spread out like a film, and enabled them to see the work they were about. During the great siege of Gibraltar, the British officers had opportunities of observing that the Gibraltar fishermen were accustomed to pour a little oil on the sea, that they might be enabled to see the oysters lying at the bottom. These two instances are obviously of the same class as that mentioned by Pliny. It was known also, about the middle of the last century, that the fishermen of Lisbon, when about to return into the Tagus, if they observed too great a surf upon the bar, were wont to empty a bottle or two of oil upon the sea, to still the surface. It was observed by the seal-catchers, that when these animals were devouring a very oily fish under water (which they frequently do), the waves above became remarkably smooth; and Sir John Pringle was informed that the herring-fishers on the coast of Scotland could see at a distance where the shoals of herrings lay, by the smoothness of the water,

supposed to be caused by the oily bodies of the fish. At Newport, in Rhode Island, the sea was generally observed to be smooth while any whaling-ships were in the harbour; from which it was inferred that the leakage from the oil-barrels had been pumped up with the bilge-water from the hold of the ship, and emptied into the sea. M. Teugnagel, passenger in a Dutch ship to the east in 1770, wrote a letter concerning his voyage to Count Bentinck, Dutch envoy at the court of St James's, in which he said: 'Near the islands of Paul and Amsterdam we met with a storm, which had nothing particular in it worthy of being communicated to you, except that the captain found himself obliged, for greater safety in wearing the ship, to pour oil into the sea, to prevent the waves breaking over her; which had an excellent effect, and succeeded in preserving her. As he poured out but a little at a time, the (Dutch) East India Company owes perhaps its ship to only six demi-ounces of olive-oil. I was present on deck when this was done; and I should not have mentioned the circumstance to you, but that we have found people here so prejudiced against the experiment, as to make it necessary for the officers on board, and myself, to give a certificate of the truth on this head—of which we made no difficulty.'

Many of the facts above narrated came to the knowledge of one who had great aptitude for ferretting out the causes of things—Benjamin Franklin. What he did and what he thought on the subject were afterwards placed upon record in the sixty-fourth volume of the *Philosophical Transactions*. How his attention became first directed to the matter, he thus tells us: 'In 1757, being at sea, in a fleet of ninety-six sail, bound against Louisbourg, I observed the wakes of two of the ships to be remarkably smooth, while all the others were ruffled by the wind, which blew fresh. Being puzzled with the differing appearance, I at last pointed it out to our captain, and asked him the meaning of it. "The cooks," said he, "have, I suppose, been just emptying their greasy water through the scuppers, which have greased the sides of those ships a little." And this answer he gave me with an air of some little contempt, as to a person ignorant of what everybody else knew. In my own mind, I at first slighted his solution, though I was not able to think of another.' In after-years, the circumstance came to his recollection, corroborated by many facts which had been communicated to him, and he resolved, thoroughly inductive philosopher as he was, to find out really whether oil does smooth the waves, and why it does so.

The first thing he did was to make an experiment in a pond on Clapham Common. He dropped a little oil on the water. 'I saw it spread itself with surprising swiftness upon the surface, but the effect of smoothing the waves was not produced, for I had applied it first upon the leeward-side of the pond, where the waves were largest, and the wind drove my oil back upon the shore. I then went to the windward-side, where they began to form; and there the oil, though not more than a teaspoonful, produced an instant calm over a surface several yards square, which spread amazingly, and extended itself gradually till it reached the lee-side, making all the quarter of the pond—perhaps half an acre—as smooth as a looking-glass.' If Franklin's figures are correct, this is really surprising; for a circular pond, fifty yards in diameter, would have barely half an acre of surface, and the oil of which he speaks is only 'a teaspoonful.' The film of oil he describes as having been reduced to a state of such extreme thinness as to give out the prismatic colours due to a thickness of only a few millionths of an inch. His next experiment consisted in the use of a bamboo walking-stick, into the upper joint of which he put a little oil whenever he was about to walk into the country. This enabled him to confirm the result of the former experiment over and over again. On one occasion, while on a visit to

Smeaton the engineer, Franklin was told by Jessop, who afterwards became eminent in the same walk of life, that some flies, drowned in a cup of oil, were seen to rotate and move about as if alive. Franklin having before observed that a film of oil on the surface of water seemed to have a sort of repulsive property, which acted not only among its own particles, but also on other light substances floating on it, conceived that this incident of the flies was merely an example of repulsion, as the oil oozed from their bodies. He shewed that organised structure had nothing to do with it, for he produced similar movements by placing on the surface of the water small oiled chips cut into the form of a comma; as the oil issued from the point of the comma, the chips began to rotate. We may mention that bits of camphor will rotate in the same way on the surface of water, and that Franklin's explanation is supported by the well-known rotatory tendency of many kinds of fireworks.

The self-taught philosopher next made an experiment in Portsmouth harbour. He selected a day when the wind was blowing strongly towards the shore near Haslar Hospital. A boat being anchored about a quarter of a mile from the shore, a barge made several short voyages out and home to windward or seaward of the boat. A small stream of oil was allowed to flow out continuously into the sea, through a hole in the cork of a stone bottle. Franklin and others stood on the shore, to watch the effect produced. Between the boat and the shore the influence was not very great; but to seaward of the boat, the line marked out by the oil was plainly perceptible, spreading out more and more, and occupying more and more of the surface. The waves continued, but their swell was gentle, and the surface was not broken up into ripple and white foam.

What is the reason that oil acts on waves in this singular way? Franklin conceived that air, when in motion in the shape of wind, rubs on the surface of water, and raises it into wrinkles, which, if the wind continues, become the parents of other waves. Every wave, when once formed, instead of subsiding into perfect quietness, subsides only to force up a neighbouring portion of water to an equal height—in the same way as a stone dropped into water raises a series of concentric waves around it. The small first-raised waves, being continually acted upon by the wind, are—even though the wind may not increase in strength—continually increased in magnitude, rising higher and extending their basis, so as to include a vast mass of water in each wave. Such being the mode in which ordinary waves are formed, Franklin conceived that whenever oil is poured on the surface of water, and is retained there by its relatively smaller specific gravity, a repulsive power is exerted which drives the particles of oil one from another, extending them into a film of exquisite tenuity. 'I imagine,' he says, 'that the wind blowing over water thus covered with a film of oil cannot easily catch upon it, so as to raise the first wrinkles, but slides over it, and leaves it smooth as it finds it. It moves a little the oil, indeed, which, being between it and the water, serves it to slide with, and prevents friction, as oil does between those parts of a machine that would otherwise rub hard together. Hence the oil dropped on the windward-side of a pond proceeds gradually to leeward, as may be seen by the smoothness it carries with it, quite to the opposite side; for the wind being thus prevented from raising the first wrinkles, which I call the elements of waves, cannot produce the waves themselves; and thus the whole pond is calmed.' The experiment at Portsmouth shewed that oil has not the effect of destroying the waves themselves: it reduces them to calm and gently swelling undulations. When the wind blows fresh, there are continually rising on the back of every great wave a number of small waves, which roughen its surface, and give the wind a kind of hold or purchase

to push it with greater force. There is cumulative evidence that the oil, though powerless against large waves already formed, will prevent the formation of the subordinate waves which so much increase their continuance and violence.

Such are the facts and experiences, some of which occurred to the thoughts of the captain of the *William Beckett*, under the circumstances narrated in our opening paragraph. He therefore ordered the long-boat and the life-boat to be each provided with a five-gallon can filled with oil; the one was manned by the captain and eight men, the other by the mate and four men. The boats started off with a very heavy sea running. On board the long-boat, the captain kept a sharp look-out for the heavy 'following' seas, the engineer being furnished with the oil-can; and whenever an extra sea within twenty yards of the boat threatened to swamp her, the captain sang out to the engineer, who 'bobbled' a gill or a gill and a half of oil into the sea; when immediately the wave seemed to divide and fall off on each side. The steamer sank five minutes after the boats left her. The long-boat reached the schooner safely, shipping only one sea; the life-boat also came safe, but the crew had been a little lavish of their oil, and suffered much from the heavy sea during the latter portion of their pull.

Other examples of recent occurrence have found record in the journals devoted to maritime affairs; but of these we will advert to only one. A ship was bound from Manilla to Singapore. Instead of beating down the China seas against a south-west monsoon, she took the eastern passage among the Philippines, and then by Macassar, Borneo, and the Strait of Banca: being eighty days on the passage. A brig had sailed some time before, called the *Armador*, laden with cocoa-nut oil. A few days after the departure of the Manilla ship, while there was a strong breeze and a nasty sea, the surface became all at once 'as smooth as a millpond,' as one of the sailors said, although the breeze still continued. On looking over the side, it seemed to the crew as if they were sailing through a sea of oil. She continued in this oil-track for three days. On arriving at Batavia, information was received that the *Armador* had arrived a little before with some of the casks of oil stove in; and that they had been continually pumping oil out of the hold into the sea. On comparing logs, it appeared that when the oily surface was first seen, the two ships were at least two hundred miles apart.

While on the subject of waves, it may not be inopportune to remark, that the measurement of the size of waves is rather a difficult matter. Poets and novelists are fond of speaking of waves as being 'mountains high;' and marine-painters are equally fond of representing ships as being deeply sunk between the troughs of the waves during a storm. It is now believed, however, by careful observers, that the actual height of waves is much less than used to be supposed. Arago has laid down a rule for estimating it. This consists in observing the height that the eye must be raised above the water-line, in order to see the crest of a coming wave in a line with the sea-horizon, when the ship is in the trough of a wave; this is difficult to accomplish at first, but is practicable after a while. The length of a wave may be estimated by noting the length of rope required to veer a spar astern of the ship, when going dead before it; in other words, so that the spar may be on the crest of one wave when the ship is on that of the preceding wave; when the sea is regular, this gives a tolerable approximation. The speed or progress of a wave may in some degree be ascertained by noting the time which is taken by the crest of a wave to pass from the spar to the ship's stern; making an allowance for the actual speed of the ship at the time. The captain of a vessel bound to the Cape of Good Hope, in 1848,

made many observations on the height, length, and speed of waves, estimated by these means—he found that on seven days of observation, in April and May, the height of the waves varied from seventeen to twenty-two feet, the length from thirty-three to fifty-five fathoms, and the speed from twenty-two to twenty-seven knots an hour. This great speed, be it observed, is not that of any current or actual body of water, but only of an impulse, communicated from particle to particle. Captain Moorsom invented a wave-gauge in 1850, to measure more accurately and regularly the actual height of waves, in places where moorings or anchorage can be obtained. A hollow tube is held up vertically, with a metal rod passing freely through it; there is a metal air-tight buoy, a weight at the lower end of the rod, and mooring apparatus to keep the buoy at a definite distance below the level of the lowest water. An air-tight disk slides easily up and down the rod, and always rests on the surface of the water; it therefore ascends and descends with every wave. The rod is graduated, to shew the interval between highest and lowest, or crest and trough. The rod drives two ferules, up and down, which just move by this kind of action; and the distance between the ferules, measured by the graduations on the rod, determines the height of the wave.

This effect of oil upon waves seems to be deserving of more attention than has been bestowed upon it. If a little oil will really smooth the ruffles of an angry sea, it is surely well to avail ourselves occasionally of such a friendly lubricator. It has been suggested that a store of oil might possibly prevent much damage to shipping in a harbour; that a surf-lined coast might be rendered by similar means more easily accessible to boats, whether life-boats or not; that a sunken ship might be rendered more visible from above, and plans more easily laid for raising her, if oil were poured on the water; that the laying down of submarine telegraphic cables might be facilitated by similar means, under special circumstances; and that divers, engaged in submarine operations with the diving-bell, might have their quantity of working light increased, if a little oil were poured upon the surface of the water.

## THE WILD HUNTRESS.

CHAPTER V.—SQUATTER AND SAINT.

RETURN we to the squatter's cabin—this time to enter it.

Inside, there is not much to be seen or described. The interior consists of a single room—of which the log-walls are the sides, and the clapboard roof the ceiling. In one corner, there is a little partition or screen—the materials composing it being skins of the black bear, and deer-hides. It is pleasant to look upon this partition: it is the shrine of modesty and virgin innocence: it proves that the squatter is not altogether a savage.

Rude as is the interior of the sheeling, it contains a few relics of bygone, better days—not spent there, but elsewhere. Some books are seen upon a little shelf—the library of Lilian's mother—and one or two pieces of furniture, that have once been decent, if not stylish. But chattels of this kind are scarce in the backwoods—even in the houses of more pretentious people than a squatter; and a log-stool or two, a table of split poplar planks, an iron pot, some pans and pails of tin, a few plates and pannikins of the same material, a gourd 'dipper' or drinking-cup, and half-a-dozen iron knives, forks, and spoons, of the



commonest kind, constitute the whole 'plenishing' of the hut.

The skin of a cougar, not long killed, hangs against the wall; beside it are the pelts of other wild animals, as the gray fox, the racoon, the rufous lynx, musk-rats, and minks. These, draping the rough gray logs, rob them to some extent of their nakedness.

By the door is suspended an old saddle, of the fashion known as *American*—a sort of cross between the high-peaked *silla* of the Mexicans and the flat pad-like English saddle; and on the adjacent peg hangs a bridle to match—its reins black with age, and its bit reddened with rust.

Some light articles of female apparel are seen hanging against the wall, near that sacred precinct where, during the night-hours, repose the fair daughters of the squatter.

It is a rude dwelling indeed—a rough casket to contain a pair of jewels so sparkling and priceless!

Just now, it is occupied by two individuals of a very different character—two men already mentioned—the hunter Hickman Holt, and his visitor Josh Stebbins, the schoolmaster of Swampville. The personal appearance of the latter has been already half described. It deserves a more detailed delineation. His probable age has been stated—about thirty. His spare figure and ill-omened aspect have been alluded to. Add to this, low stature, a tripe-coloured skin, a beardless face, a shrinking chin, a nose sharp-pointed and peckish, lank black hair falling over the forehead, and hanging down almost low enough to shadow a pair of deep-set weasel-like eyes: give to this combination of features a slightly sinister aspect, and you have the portrait of Josh Stebbins. It is not easy to tell the cause of this sinister expression, for the features are not irregular; and, but for its bilious colour, the face could scarcely be termed ill-looking. The eyes do not squint; and the thin lips appear making a constant effort to look smiling and saint-like. Perhaps it is this outward affectation of the saintly character—believing, as it evidently does, the spirit within—that produces the unfavourable impression. In earlier youth, the face may have been better favoured; but a career, spent in the exercise of evil passions, has left more than one 'blaze' upon it.

It is difficult to reconcile such a career with the demeanour of the man, and especially with his present occupation; but Josh Stebbins has not always been a schoolmaster; and the pedagogue of a border settlement is not necessarily expected to be a model of morality. Even if it were so, this lord of the hickory-switch is comparatively a stranger in Swampville; and, perhaps, only the best side of his character has been exhibited to the parents and guardians of the settlement. That is of the saintly order; and, as if to strengthen the illusion, a dress of clerical cut has been assumed, as also a white cravat, and black boat-brimmed hat. The coat, waistcoat, and trousers are of broad cloth—though not of the finest quality. It is just such a costume as might be worn by one of the humbler class of Methodist border ministers, or by a Catholic priest—a somewhat rarer bird in the backwoods. Josh Stebbins is neither one nor the other; although, as will shortly appear, his assumption of the ecclesiastical style is not altogether confined to his dress: of late he has also affected the clerical calling. The *ci-devant* attorney's clerk—whilom the schoolmaster of Swampville—is now an 'Apostle'—an 'Elder' of the 'Latter-day Saints.'

The character is new—the faith itself is not very

old—for the events we are relating occurred during the first decade of the Mormon revelation. Even Holt himself is only now made aware of the change: as would appear from a certain air of astonishment, with which he regards the clerical habiliments of his visitor.

It would be difficult to imagine a greater contrast, than that presented in the appearance of these two men. Were we to select two parallel types from the animal world, they would be the sly fox, and the grizzly bear—the latter represented by the squatter himself.

In Hickman Holt we behold a personage of unwonted aspect—a man of gigantic stature—with a beard reaching to the second button of his coat, and a face not to be looked upon without a sensation of terror—a countenance expressive of determined courage, but at the same time of fierceness, untamed by any trace of a softer emotion. The shaggy sand-coloured beard, slightly grizzled—eyebrows like a *chevaux de frise* of hogs' bristles—eyes of a greenish gray—with a broad livid scar across the left cheek—are component parts in producing this aspect; while a red cotton handkerchief wound turban-like around the head, and pulled low down in front, renders its expression more palpable and pronounced.

A loose coat of thick green blanket, somewhat faded and worn, adds to the colossal appearance of the man; while a red flannel shirt serves him also for a vest. His huge limbs are inserted in pantaloons of blue Kentucky 'jeans;' but these are scarcely visible—as the skirt of the ample blanket-coat drapes down so as to cover the tops of a pair of rough horse-skin boots, that reach to the knee. The costume is common enough on the banks of the Mississippi; the colossal form is not rare; but the fierce repulsive face—that is more individual.

Is this the father of Marian and Lilian? Is it possible that from so rude a stem could spring such graceful branches—flowers so fair and lovely? If so, then must the mothers of both have been beautiful beyond common!

It is even true, and true that both were beautiful—were, for they are gone, and Hickman Holt is twice a widower. Long ago, he buried the half-blood mother of Marian; and at a later period—though still years ago—her gentle golden-haired successor was carried to an early grave.

The latter event occurred in one of the settlements, nearer to the region of civilised life. There was a murmur of mystery about the second widowhood of Hickman Holt—which only became hushed on his 'moving' further west, to the wild forest where we now find him. Here no one knows aught of his past life or history—one only excepted—and that is the man, who is to-day his visitor.

Contrasting the two men—regarding the superior size and more formidable aspect of the owner of the cabin, you would expect his guest to make some show of obeisance to him. On the contrary, it is the squatter who shews signs of complaisance: saluting his visitor with an air of embarrassment, but ill concealed under the words of welcome with which he receives him. Throughout the scene of salutation, the latter has maintained his characteristic demeanour of half-smiling, half-sneering coolness. In their behaviour to one another, even a careless observer could perceive, that, the smaller man is the *master*.

#### CHAPTER VI.

##### AN APOSTOLIC EFFORT.

The morning needed no fire, but there were embers upon the clay-hearth—some smouldering ends of fagots—over which the breakfast had been cooked. On one side of these the squatter placed a stool for his visitor; and then himself, as if mechanically, on the

other side. A table of rough-hewn planks stood between: on this was a bottle containing maize-corn whisky—or 'bald face,' as it is more familiarly known in the backwoods—two cracked tea-cups to drink it out of, a couple of corn-cob pipes, and some black tobacco.

All these preparations had been made beforehand; and confirmed, what had dropped from the lips of Lilian, that the visitor had been expected.

Beyond the customary phrases of salutation, not a word was exchanged between host and guest, until both had seated themselves. The squatter then commenced the conversation.

'Yev hed a long ride, Josh,' said he, leaning towards the table, and clutching the holt of the bottle: 'try a taste of this hyar *rot-gut*—'taint the daintiest o' drink to offer a man so genteelly dressed as you are this mornin'; but thar's wuss liker in these hyar back-oods, I reckon. Will ye mix? Thar's water in the jug.'

'No water for me,' was the laconic reply.

'Yur right thar. It's from old Hatcher's still—whar they usally put the water in afore they give it to you. I s'pose they do it to save a fellur the trouble o' mixin'—ha, ha, ha!'

The squatter laughed at his own jest—not as if he enjoyed it to any great extent, but rather as if desirous of putting his visitor in good-humour. The only evidence of his success was a dry smile, that curled upon the thin lip of the saint rather sarcastically than otherwise.

There was silence, while both drank; and Holt was again under the necessity of beginning the conversation. As already known, he had noticed the altered style of the schoolmaster's costume; and it was to this transformation that his next speech alluded.

'Why, Josh,' said he, attempting an easy off-hand style of talk, 'you're bran new, spick-span, from head to foot! Ye look for all the world jest like one o' them ere cantin' critters o' preachers I often see prowlin' about Swampville. Durn it, man! what dodge air you up to now? You haint got religion, I hope?'

'I have,' gravely responded Stebbins.

'Hooraw! ha, ha, ha! Wal, what sort o' thing is it anyhow?'

'My religion is of the right sort, Brother Holt.'

'Methody?'

'Nothing of the kind.'

'What, then? I thort they war all Methodies in Swampville?'

'They're all *Gentiles* in Swampville—worse than infidels themselves.'

'Wal—I know they brag mightily on thar genteelity. I reckon you're about right thar—they storekeepers air stuck up enough for anythin'.'

'No, no; it's not that I mean. My religion has nothing to do with Swampville. Thank the Lord for his mercy, I've been led into a surer way of salvation. I suppose, Brother Holt, you've heard of the new Revelation?'

'Heern o' the new rev'lution. Wal, I don't know as I hev. What's the name o't?'

'The book of *Mormon*.'

'Oh! *Mormons*! I've heern o' them. Haint they been a fightin' a spell up thar in Massouray or Illinoy, whar they built 'em a grandiferous temple? I heern some talk o' it.'

'At Nauvoo—it is even so, Brother Holt. The wicked *Gentiles* have been persecuting the Saints: just as their fathers were persecuted by the Egyptian Pharaohs.'

'An' haint they killed thar head-man—Smith, he war called, if I recollect right?'

'Alas, true! Joseph Smith has been made a martyr, and is now an angel in heaven. No doubt, he is now in glory, at the head of an angelic host.'

'Wal, if the angels air weemen, he'll hev a good

when o' 'em, I reckon. I've heern he war at the head o' a putty consid'able host o' 'em, up thar in Massouray—fifty wives they said he hed! War that ere true, Josh?'

'Scandal, Brother Holt—all scandal of the wicked world. They were but wives in the *spirit*: that the *Gentiles* can't comprehend—since their eyes have not been opened by the Revelation.'

'Wal, it 'peers to be a tol'able free religion. Sort o' Turk, aint it?'

'Nothing of the kind. It has nothing in common with the doctrines of Mohammedanism.'

'But whar did you get it, Josh Stebbins? Who gin it to ye?'

'You remember the man I brought over here last fall?'

'Sartint, I do. Young he war—Brig Young, I think, you called him?'

'The same.'

'In coorse, I remember him well enough; but I reckon our Mar do a leetle better. He tried to spark the girl, an' made fine speeches to her; but she couldn't bar the sight o' him, for all that. Ha, ha, ha! Don't ye recollect the trick that ar minks played on him? She unbuckled the girt o' his saddle, jest as he war agoin' to mount, an' down he kim—saddle, bags, an' all—cawollup to the airth! ha! ha! Arter he war gone, I larked till I war like to bust.'

'You did wrong, Hickman Holt, to encourage your daughter in her sauciness. Had you known the man—that man, sir, was a prophet!'

'A prophet!'

'Yes—the greatest perhaps the world ever saw—a man in direct communication with the Almighty himself.'

'Lord! 'Twant Joe Smith, war it?'

'No; but one as great as he—one who has inherited his spirit; and who is now the head of the Saints.'

'That fellur at tha head? You 'stonish me, Josh Stebbins.'

'Ah! well you may be astonished: he has astonished me, Hickman Holt. He has turned me from evil ways, and led me to fear the Lord.'

The squatter looked incredulous, but remained silent.

'Yes—that same man, who was here with me in your humble cabin, is now Chief-Priest of the Mormon Church! He has laid his hands on this poor head, and constituted me one of his humble Apostles.'

'Apostles?'

'Yes, one of the *Twelve* intrusted with spreading the true faith of the Saints over all the world.'

'Hooraw for you, Josh Stebbins! You'll be jest the man for that sort o' thing; yev got the larnin' for it, haint you?'

'No doubt, Brother Holt, with the help of the Lord, my humble acquirements will be useful; for though *He* only can open for us poor sinners the kingdom of Grace, yet he suffers such weak instruments, as myself, to point out the narrow path that leads to it. Just as with the Philistines of old, the hearts of the *Gentiles* are hardened like flint-stones, and refuse to receive the true faith. Unlike the followers of Mohammed, we propagate not by the sword, but by the influence of ratiocination.'

'What?'

'Ratiocination.'

'What mout that be?'

'Reason—reason.'

'Oh! common sense you mean, I s'pose?'

'Exactly so—reasoning that produces conviction; and, I flatter myself, that, being gifted with some little sense and skill, my efforts, may be crowned with success.'

'Wal, Josh, 'thout talkin o' common sense, yev got a good grist o' lawyer's sense—that I know; an' so, I suppose, you've tuk it in your head to make beginnin' on me? Aint that why yev come over this mornin'?''

'What?'

'To make a Mormon o' me?'

Up to this time, the conversation had been carried on in a somewhat stiff and irrelevant manner: this more especially on the side of the squatter, who—notwithstanding his endeavours to assume an air of easy nonchalance—was evidently labouring under suspicion and constraint. From the fact of Stebbins having sent a message to forewarn him of this visit, he knew that the schoolmaster had some business with him, of more than usual importance; and it was with a view to ascertain the nature of this business, and relieve himself from suspense, that the interrogatory was put. He would have been right glad to have received an answer in the affirmative—since it would have been no trouble to him to turn Mormon, or profess to do so; and for a moment he half indulged in the hope, that this might be the errand on which Stebbins had come—as was evinced by a more cheerful expression on his countenance.

As the saint, however, lingered long before making reply, the shadows of suspicion again darkened over the brow of the squatter; and, with a nervous uneasiness, he awaited the answer.

'It'll be a tough job, Josh,' said he, with an effort to appear unconcerned—'a tough job, mind ye.'

'Well, so I should expect,' answered the apostle drily; 'and, just for that reason, I don't intend to try it: though I should like, Brother Holt, to see you gathered into the fold. I know our great High-Priest would make much of a man like you. The Saints have many enemies, and need strong arms and stout hearts such as yours, Hickman Holt. The Lord has given to his Prophet the right to defend the true faith—even with carnal weapons, if others fail; and woe be to them who make war on us! Let them dread the *Destroying Angels*!'

'The Destroyin' Angels! What sort o' critters be they?'

'They are the *Danites*.'

'Wal, I'm jest as wise as ever, Josh. Dod rot it, man! don't be mysterious. Who air the Danites, I shud like to know?'

'You can only know them by initiation, and you shoud know them: you're just the man to be one of them; and I have no doubt you'd be made one, as soon as you joined us.'

The apostle paused, as if to note the effect of his words; but the colossal hunter appeared, as if he had not heard them. It was not from impassibility, but rather because he was not heeding them—his mind being occupied with a presentiment of some more unpleasant proposal on the part of his visitor. He remained silent, however: leaving it to the latter to proceed to the ultimate declaration of his design.

The suspicions of the squatter—if directed to anything connected with his family affairs—were well grounded, and soon received confirmation. After a pause, the Mormon continued:

'No, Hickman Holt, it aint with you my business lies to-day—that is, not exactly with you.'

'Who, then?'

'Your daughter!'

#### CHAPTER VII.

##### THE MORMON'S DEMAND.

A shudder passed through the herculean frame of the hunter—though it was scarcely perceptible, from the effort he made to conceal it. It was noticed for all that; and the emotion that caused it perfectly understood. The keen eye of the *ci-devant* law-clerk was too skilled, in reading the countenance, to be deceived by an effort at impassibility.

'My daughter?' muttered Holt, half interrogatively.

'Your daughter!' echoed the Mormon, with imper-turbable coolness.

'But which o' 'em? Thar air two.'

'Oh! you know which I mean—Marian, of course.'

'An' what do ye want wi' Marian, Josh?'

'Come, Brother Holt! it's no use your feigning ignorance. I've spoken to you of this before: you know well enough what I want.'

'Dang me, if I do! I remember what ye sayed afore; but I thort ye war only jokin'.'

'I was in earnest then, Hickman Holt, and I'm still more in earnest now. I want a wife, and I think Marian would suit me admirably. I suppose you know that the Saints have moved off from Illinois, and are now located beyond the Rocky Mountains?'

'I've heern somethin' o' t.'

'Well, I propose going there to join them; and I must take a wife with me: for no man is welcome who comes there without one.'

'Y—e—e—s,' drawled the squatter, with a bitter smile; 'an' from what I've heern, I reckon he'd be more welkum if he fetched half-a-dozen.'

'Nonsense, Hickman Holt. I wonder a man of your sense would listen to such lies. It's a scandal that's been scattered abroad, by a set of corrupt priests and Methodist preachers: who are jealous of us, because we're drawing their people. Sheer wicked lies, every word of it!'

'Wal, I don't know about that. But I know one thing, to a sartinty—you'll niver git Marian's consent.'

'I don't want Marian's consent—that don't signify, so long as I have yours.'

'Mine?'

'Ay, yours; and I must have it. Look here, Hickman Holt! Listen to me! We're making too long a talk about this business; and I have no time to waste in words. I have made everything ready, and shall leave for the Salt Lake, before three more days have passed over my head. The caravan, I'm going with, is to start from Fort Smith on the Arkansas; and it'll be ready, by the time I get there, to move over the plains. I've bought me a team and wagon; it's already loaded and packed; and there's a corner in it, left expressly for your daughter: therefore, she must go.'

The tone of the speaker had suddenly changed, from that of saintly insinuation, to bold open menace. The squatter, notwithstanding his fierce and formidable aspect, did not dare to reply in the same strain: he was evidently cowed, and suffering under some fearful apprehension.

'Must go?' he muttered, half-involuntarily, as if echoing the other's words.

'Yes, must and shall.'

'I tell you, Josh Stebbins, she'll niver consent.'

'And I tell you, Hickman Holt, I don't want her consent; that I leave you to obtain; and if you can't get it otherwise, you must force it. Bah! what is it for? A good husband—a good home—plenty of meat, drink, and dress: for don't you get it into your fancy that the Latter-day Saints resemble your canting hypocrites of other creeds, who think they please God with their miserable penances. Quite the reverse, I can assure you. We mean to live, as God intended men should live—eat, drink, and be merry. Look there!'

The speaker exhibited a handful of shining gold pieces.

'That's the way our Church provides for its apostles. Your daughter will be a thousand times better off there, than in this wretched hovel. Perhaps she will not mind the change, so much as you appear to think. I know many a first-class girl that would be glad of the chance.'

'I know she won't give in—far less to be made a Mormon o'. I've heern her speak agin 'em.'

'I say again, she must give in. After all, you needn't tell her I'm Mormon; she needn't know anything about that. Let her think I'm only moving



out west to Oregon—where there are plenty of respectable emigrants now going. She'll not suspect anything in that. Once out at Salt Lake, she'll soon get reconciled to Mormon life, I guess.

The squatter remained silent for some moments: his head hanging forward over his broad breast, his eyes turned inward—as if searching within his bosom for some thought to guide and direct him. In there, no doubt, a terrible struggle was going on—a tumult of mixed emotions. He loves his daughter, and would leave her to her own will; but he fears this saintly suitor, and dares not gainsay him. It must be some dread secret, or fiendish scheme, that enables this small insignificant man to sway the will of such a giant!

A considerable time passed, and still the squatter vouchsafed no answer: he was evidently wavering, as to the nature of the response he should make. Twice or thrice, he raised his head, stealthily directing his glance to the countenance of his visitor; but only to read, in the looks of the latter, a fixed and implacable purpose. There was no mercy there.

All at once, a change came over the colossus—a resolution of resistance—as evinced by his altered attitude and the changed expression of his face. The triumphant glances of the pseudo-saint appeared to have provoked him, more than the matter in dispute. Like the buffalo of the plains stung with Indian arrows, or the great *mysticetus* of the deep goaded by the harpoon of the whaler, all the angry energies of his nature appeared suddenly aroused from their lethargy; and he sprang to his feet, towering erect in the presence of his tormentor.

'Tarnation!' cried he, striking the floor with his heavy heel, 'she won't do it—she won't, and she *shan't*.'

'Keep cool, Hickman Holt!' rejoined the Mormon without moving from his seat—'keep cool! I expected this; but it's all bluster. I tell you she will, and she *shall*.'

'Hev a care, Josh Stebbins! Hev a care what yer about! Ye don't know what you may drive me to—'

'But I know what I may lead you to,' interrupted the other with a sneering smile.

'Whar?' involuntarily inquired Holt.

'The gallowa,' laconically answered Stebbins.

'Devils an' durnation!'

This emphatic rejoinder was accompanied with a furious grinding of teeth, but with a certain recoiling—as if the angry spirit of the giant could still be stayed by such a menace.

'It's no use swearing about it, Holt,' continued the Mormon, after a certain time had passed in silence. 'My mind's made up—the girl must go with me. Say yes or no. If yes, then all's well—well for your daughter, and well for you too. I shall be out of your way—Salt Lake's a long distance off—and it's not likely you'll ever set eyes on me again. You understand me?'

The saint pronounced these last words with a significant emphasis; and then paused, as if to let them have their full weight.

They appeared to produce an effect. On hearing them, a gleam, like a sudden flash of sunlight, passed over the countenance of the squatter. It appeared the outward index of some consolatory thought freshly conceived; and its continuance proved, that it was influencing him to take a different view of the Mormon's proposal.

He spoke at length; but no longer in the tone of rage—for his passion seemed to have subsided, as speedily as it had sprung up.

'An' s'pose I say no?'

'Why, in that case, I shall not start so soon as I had intended. I shall stay in the settlements till I have performed a duty that, for a long time, I have left undone.'

'What duty is 't you mean?'

'One I owe to society; and which I have perhaps sinfully neglected—bring a murderer to justice!'

'Hush! Josh Stebbins—for Heaven's sake, speak low! You know it isn't true—but, hush! The girls are 'ithout. Don't let them hear such talk!'

'Perhaps,' continued Stebbins, without heeding the interruption, 'perhaps that murderer fancies he might escape. He is mistaken if he do. One word from me in Swampville, and the hounds of the law would be upon him; ay, and if he could even get clear of them, he could not escape out of my power. I have told you I am an Apostle of the great Mormon Church; and that man would be cunning indeed who could shun the vengeance of our Destroying Angels. Now, Hickman Holt, which is it to be? yes or no?'

The pause was ominous for poor Marian. The answer decided her doom. It was delivered in a hoarse husky voice.

'Yes—yes—she may go!'

#### FROM MY CASTLE IN THE AIR.

'THERE he goes to his sky-chamber, poor fellow,' was the expression I caught last night from the lips of a pitying tourist, as he stood in the High Street of Edinburgh, and beheld me with my bundle setting foot upon the first step of the long staircase that leads to my Castle in the Air. He and his friend had just come from London—the great City of Extremity—as I, years ago, had done; and perceiving from my reply to some chance question that my tongue was English, they had been conversing with me about this and that in the street. They evidently thought my attic but a poor place to live in. 'What! did I really lodge in that ninth story yonder, which it almost dislocated one's neck to look up at! And was there no "hoist" within, to save human legs from giving way? It must at least be a good place for a bad memory to make improvement in, since nobody who forgot anything that he should have brought down with him, and had to return for it, would be likely to forget a second time. Why, it was an impious and not altogether unsuccessful attempt to rebuild the Tower of Babel.' Thus, after the good-tempered southern manner, they derided my lofty eyrie, and declined to accompany me so far to see how their fellow-townsmen fared in his star-communing apartment.

'There he goes to his sky-chamber, poor fellow,' said one of them as we parted, in a tone of pity, not meant for me to hear; and, I daresay, he conceived a picture from its windows no better than those of a London attic are able to afford. A wilderness of house-roofs, tenanted by starving cats, watching unapproachable pigeons; an atmosphere of soot, through which the sun is seen as through burned glass; and a ceaseless rumbling from the unseen streets beneath, as though that part of the world were suffering from chronic earthquake. I have known what it is well enough, and have rarely cared to look up from my wheel—for I am a journeyman turner—to gaze on such a scene whether in winter or summer. From my present Castle in the Air the view is very different. It is my will, and not my poverty, that consents to my occupying so elevated a region. I could well afford to lodge half-a-dozen stories lower, and look out over the way only. As it is, I am Asmodeus—I am a prince of the powers of the air. It would be an abuse of my high privileges to reveal the spectacles which offer themselves to me in the apartments of my inferior neighbours, although they would form, doubtless, most interesting Domestic Intelligence. I forbear to state whether Mr or Mrs Donald Macintosh is the first to get up on a winter's morning, or which of them is tyrannously compelled to turn off the gas at night—although I *could*, mind you, for blinds are totally unknown in these high latitudes.

I am not going to disturb the harmony of the convivial evenings, beginning at eleven o'clock P.M., which are passed under my observation in the tailor's room yonder, by disclosing which flat he lives in to the commissioners of the Forbes Mackenzie Act. I say not one word of that Highland uniform from the Castle, a glimpse of which I am sure to catch in the shoemaker's parlour whenever that unsuspecting little man has business in the country, and his pretty wife has not. Jeanie Dugaldson (that was) and Sergeant Macalpin are cousins, as everybody knows (though rather far away), and maybe they do but talk about old times. At all events, it is no concern of mine; and indeed I do not trouble myself much with my neighbours and their doings, except the day be wet, or the sights further afield be hid in mist. The spectacle of my fellow-creatures, so immediately and yet so far beneath me, reduced to pigmies, and speckling the narrowed street like flies upon a window-pane, perhaps dwarfs my interest in the human. I prefer rather, as I stand or sit by my lathe's side, which does not always require my eye upon it, to snatch glimpses of the eternal hills and of the sea.

In the summer evenings, when my work is done, as now, I lean out from my Castle in the Air, and behold such sights as elsewhere attic windows rarely look upon. A rocky circlet, a mural crown of crags is set to eastward, and above it, but still close at hand, rises the Lion Hill—the green gray mountain that keeps guard over the city. Beneath it, and within its morning shadow, stands the king's house, tenanted at times by monarch, and always haunted by royal and ancient memories. This hill, from morn to eve, is the resort of young and old, and all that love to feel the turf beneath their feet, and the mountain airs come fresh to cheek and brain. The soldiers often meet there in their glancing panoply, to me but like the brilliant insects that flit above the sunlit grass, and their hands of music like to the hum of insects. From thence, and up the narrow way that leads beneath me, have oft, in bygone times, men come with sword in hand, and in no mimic war; with kings, their captains or their captives; and with criminals or martyrs, their wrists cruelly bound behind them, to suffer death in yonder place in sight of all men. The whole street is, as it were, a page out of the annals of the land, here defiled with blood, here cleansed with saintliest tears; a palace at one end, and at the other a fortress, that has as often been a prison. What sights have its old walls looked down upon! What sounds of wars and tumults have gone up thither! What cries for vengeance and for mercy!

I picture from my Castle in the Air the gay processions that have passed this way, of knights and dames, and all the gallant show that fits a court; the triumphant march, what time some new-made king rode by, amid the plaudits of the lookers-on, of whom some loved him, and some loved him not, and most cared nothing if he reigned or no, so there were sights and feastings; the dread and slow approach of them whom axe or rope awaited yonder, whose feet the people would have kissed but for the stern-browed guards, or whom, but for them, may be, they would have torn asunder; the hideous haste of the careering mob with victims of their own; or the far worse delay of priests or presbyters with *theirs*, with cruel circumstance of blasphemous prayer and hypocritical rite doing their lawful murders. How fearful to have seen the lurid flame light up yon pile, when it played o'er the writhing bodies of men, made after the image of their God, and burned alive in his most sacred name!

Dreaming, without my will, of such red sights, I thank the cool west wind for waking me, and bearing my thoughts to seaward. Beyond the town, though almost one with it, there lies the Port, its docks packed close with shipping, and its piers like two vast arms stretched forth to woo the sea. Were nothing else in view but that same Firth, yet many a merchant

prince and nobleman might, in their land-locked mansions, envy me. It combines the river and the ocean; widening out to eastward, till the coast is lost on either side, but to westward narrowing past bay and creek, fair island and white fishing-town, up to the green heart of the hills. This highway of the vessels is never unfrequented: all day long the white sails speck its bosom, and the steam-ships stain its sky with their black pennants, while through the night I see their vigilant lamps, like shooting-stars, pass swiftly out and in. Some few days back, I saw a vision of ships such as was never before beheld from Scottish town. The Channel Fleet came sailing up the Roads, where men-of-war are almost rare as whales, and now they lie at anchor in the Forth, beyond the headland. If some Paul Jones must needs return to us, as once he came, demanding ransom of the port of Leith, I would it might be now. How very much astonished and alarmed the Yankee privateer would be, to see one of those Wooden Walls come stealing out from yon hid anchorage, with all its hundred mouths agrin for joy! I love the Firth, for the sun shines upon it brighter than on land; and when the wind blows, all its waves are rolled like the charge of a thousand knights with snow-white plumes; but I love more the mountains that lie beyond it. In hottest July, I have small wish to fly the town; but in my Castle in the Air I sit, and gaze upon those great cool hills in the far west, whose feet are in the fair still lochs I know. Their tops have snow upon them long after that all other things are green; but now they have no snow, save snow-white cloud, which like a snow-flake rests and melts away. I point athwart the narrow street, across the crowded town, over the green meads, the waving woodlands, and the sparkling sea, to that great nest of giants, and single out with a sure finger one, their chief—Ben Lomond. Such are the sights from my sky-parlour, pitying friend; such are the glories I look out upon from my Castle in the Air.

#### THE GONE-BEFORE

ALAS! we are prone to say:

'We have fallen on evil hours,'  
When a ripened spirit floats away  
Like the breath of the fading flowers,  
And a seed, on the wings of a dying day,  
Is borne to the heavenly bowers!

Yet toil has a right to rest,  
And the wearied a right to go,  
And Love has a right to save the best  
From the weight of the coming blow.  
We gaze on the joys of the parted Blessed  
Through the tears of a selfish woe.

'Tis blood, not tears, should fall  
O'er the brave who breathe no more,  
For empty the breach in the crumbling wall  
Which they manned in the days of yore,  
And who shall respond to the trumpet-call  
To rescue the banner they bore?

Can the warrior now survey  
How the distant combat wears?  
Let him learn to wait—nor rashly say  
That the valiant have left no heirs—  
Till he watch the deeds of the changing day  
From a crowning height like theirs;  
Till the smoke of the fray  
Shall have rolled away  
On the breath of their answered prayers.

R. R.

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